

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ADDIS 01335 051110Z
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /009 W
-----051114 041143 /12

P 050814Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2978

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 1335

STADIS//////////

FOR AF AND AF/E ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, ET
SUBJ: KAGNEW STATION

REF: ADDIS ABABA 1078

1. CONSUL GENERAL SLUTZ HAS SENT TWO TELEGRAMS TO ME DATED MARCH 4 DESCRIBING SITUATION AT KAGNEW STATION AS HE FOUND IT WHEN HE RETURNED FROM ADDIS FOLLOWING SEELYE VISIT. IN ESSENCE HE FOUND RAMPANT SPECULATION AND WILD RUMORS OF IMMINENT KAGNEW CLOSEDOWN WHICH BEING OPENLY DISCUSSED WITH EVERYONE. INTER ALIA, RUMORS HAVE CERTAINLY REACHED EPMG SECOND DIVISION. IN SLUTZ JUDGMENT SPECULATION AND RUMORS HAVE BEEN FOSTERED BY INCOMING NAVY CHANNEL MESSAGES WHICH WE ARE NOT SEEING AND WHICH MAY INCLUDE SOME OR ALL OF THOSE MENTIONED REFTEL.

2. I FIND THIS TO BE INEXCUSABLE. THERE IS NO DECISION THAT I AM AWARE OF CONCERNING FUTURE OF KAGNEW, AND UNTIL THERE IS, NO AGENCY OF USG SHOULD BE ACTING ON ITS OWN. WHILE DAMAGE HAS PROBABLY ALREADY BEEN DONE, DEPT SHOULD GET IN TOUCH WITH NAVY AND WITH CISCO ASAP, AND ASK THEM TO COOL IT IMMEDIATELY.

3. TEXT OF ASMARA'S 179 TO ADDIS ONLY FOLLOWS:

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 ADDIS 01335 051110Z

1. UPON MY RETURN TO POST TUES. MARCH 1, I FOUND RAMPANT SPECULATION AMONG PERSONNEL AT KAGNEW STATION WITH WILD RUMORS OF IMMINENT CLOSEDOWN OPENLY DISCUSSED WITH LOCAL EMPLOYEES, VISITORS, GIRL FRIENDS, ETC. PLUMMETING CISCO MORALE LARGELY DUE TO NAVY CHANNEL INCOMING MESSAGES CONTAINING CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR PULL-OUT WITH VARIOUS OPTIONAL DATES, INCLUDING, APPARENTLY, APRIL 1 AS

A POSSIBLE TARGET. (ALMOST ALL THESE MEN ARE COMMUNICATORS.) THIS CONTAGION COUPLED WITH ANNOUNCEMENT OF MAP CUT-OFF, ARRIVAL OF CUBAN MILITARY MISSION (PRESUMABLY TO REPLACE AMERICANS), UNEASINESS OVER RECENT COURSE OF MILITARY CONFLICT IN PARTS OF ERITREA, AND PRESENCE OF HUGHES TECHNICIAN ADVISING ON DISMANTLEMENT OF SATCOM, TENDED CONVINCE MOST CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES THAT PRECIPITOUS WITHDRAWAL WAS BEING PREPARED. LOW MORALE AND RUMOR MILL WERE EXASPERBATED BY UNTHINKING ACTION OF CISCO MGR. WHO MAILED OFF ALL HIS PERSONAL EFFECTS, AND DEPARTED FEB 28 ON R&R TO ATHENS. THIS ACTION HELPED PRECIPITATE THE WEEKEND RUN ON FPO FACILITIES TO MAIL OUT PERSONAL EFFECTS.

2. WITHIN TWO HOURS MY ARRIVAL MARCH 1, I CONVENED MEETING WITH OI C, CHIEF OF PA&E, AND ACTING MANAGER CISCO TO EXPLAIN MY UNDERSTANDING OF DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IN TRAIN IN WASHINGTON REGARDING KAGNEW (AND US-EPMG BILATERAL RELATIONS) AND TO SOLICIT THEIR SUPPORT IN QUELLING RUMOR MILL. THEIR COOPERATION WAS WHOLEHEARTED AND REFLECTED THEIR DISMAY AT WILDLY LOOSE TALK. BELIEVE SITUATION NOW MORE CALM BUT DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE. IT NOW UNLIKELY THAT ANYONE IN ASMARA IS IGNORANT OF KAGNEW PERSONNEL BELIEF THAT STATION TO BE CLOSED SOON.

3. IN CIRCUMSTANCES, BELIEVE THERE IS NO WAY WE CAN QUIETLY ORCHESTRATE PHWSE-DOWN AT OUR OWN TERMS AND WITH OUR OWN OPTIONS, IF SUCH INDEED IS COURSE EVENTUALLY AGREED UPON IN WASH.

4. YOUR EARLIER DISTRESS AT UNCOORDINATED NAVY PLANNING AND SHUFFLE OF MESSAGES TO AND FROM ASMARA, WITH NO INDICATION THAT STATE OR NSC AWARE OF PROGRESS THESE PLANS, WAS WELL-FOUNDED. THEY HAVE DONE GRAVE DISSERVICE TO PERSONNEL ON SCENE AND PERHAPS ENDANGERED THEIR LIVES. BY NOW OFFICERS AND MEN OF SECOND DIVISION
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 ADDIS 01335 051110Z

WELL AWARE OF WIDESPREAD BELIEF AMONG KAGNEW PERSONNEL THAT STATION TO BE CLOSED, PERHAPS SOON. AT LEAST ONE EMPLOYEE HAS BEEN CONTACTED BY 2ND DIV OFFICER TO BUY PERSONAL EFFECTS AND HOUSE-HOLD FURNITURE. YOU WILL RECALL CONTRETEMPS WHEN TRANSMITTER SITE (TRACT DELTA) WAS ABANDONED IN 1975 RESULTING IN EXPLOSIVE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ARMED SECOND DIVISION TROOPS WITHOUT OFFICERS AND KAGNEW PERSONNEL OVER LAST-MINUTE DISPOSITION OF FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT. OUR LONG-STANDING BELIEF IS THAT EPMG OFFICIALLY AND TROOPS INDIVIDUALLY EXPECT TO INHERIT ALL OF KAGNEW GOODIES LOCK-STOCK-AND-BARREL. WE WILL OF COURSE CONTINUE TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ASSURE ORDERLY RETIREMENT IF NECZSSARY AND IN MEANTIME ENSURE RECOUPMENT OF SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED ELSEWHERE, BUT NAVY HAS LARGELY PREEMPTED OUR OWN CAREFUL PLANNING AND EXPOSED US TO VAGARIES OF TRIGGER-HAPPY TROOPS WHO ARE UNLIKELY TO LOOK KINDLY ON EVAPORATION OF EXPZCTED BONANZA.

5. YOU MAY WISH TO SHARE CONTENTS THIS MESSAGE WITH SENIOR DEPT. OFFICERS WHO WILL BE MAKING DECISIONS REGARDING KAGNEW. CERTAIN CONTINGENCY SCENARIOS HAVE ALREADY GONE DOWN THE DRAIN.

4. TEXT OF ASMARA 180 TO ADDIS (ONLY) FOLLOWS:

1. AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF HOW THE RUMORS OF OUR IMMINENT WITHDRAWAL

FROM KAGNEW WERE INITIATED WAS THE VISIT OF HUGHES AIRCRAFT TECHNICIAN JAMES SEAY. SEAY ARRIVED IN ASMARA ON FEB 21 OSTENSIBLY TO PERFORM ROUTINE MAINTENANCE ON THE SATCOM INSTALLATION. IN FACT, AFTER HIS ARRIVAL IT WAS LEARNED THAT HE WAS TASKED BY CONUS AUTHORITIES WITH SURVEYING THE SATCOM TERMINAL FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISASSEMBLY AND REMOVAL. AS A TECHNICIAN HE WAS NOT INFORMED AS TO WHEN THE TERMINAL WAS TO BE REMOVED, BUT SIMPLY PROCEEDED TO CONSULT WITH THE SATCOM SUPERVISOR AND TECHNICIANS CONCERNING THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SATCOM'S DISASSEMBLY AND REMOVAL.

2. SUCH CONSULTATIONS INCLUDED AVAILABILITY OF HEAVY EQUIPMENT, I.E. CRANES, FORKLIFTS, ETC., REQUIREMENTS FOR SKILLED AND UN-SKILLED WORKERS, AND THE AVAILABILITY OF PACKING MATERIALS. SEAY REQUESTED THAT THE SATCOM SUPERVISOR COORDINATE WITH THE PA&E MANAGER TO HAVE THE LIGHTING AND HYDRAULIC SYSTEMS ON THE SATCOM

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 ADDIS 01335 051110Z

VANS CHECKED AND SERVICED AS REQUIRED. INVENTORIES OF SATCOM EQUIPMENT AND OPERATING MANUALS WERE CONDUCTED, AND PLANS WERE MADE FOR DISASSEMBLY OF THE RADOME AND ANTENNA.

3. ALL THESE MEASURES WERE DISCUSSED WITH VARIOUS LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT AND WITH TECHNICAL PERSONNEL. THEREFORE THE FACT THAT PLANS WERE BEING MADE FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE HEART OF THE MYSTIC STAR SYSTEM BECAME COMMON KNOWLEDGE THROUGHOUT THE KAGNEW COMMUNITY. AS THE KAGNEW PERSONNEL, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE NAVY DETACHMENT ARE AWARE THAT THE NAVAL COMMUNICATION MISSION IS CLEARLY REDUNDANT, THE REMOVAL OF SATCOM CONFIRMED FOR THEM THE IMMINENT CLOSURE OF KAGNEW. THUS, SEAY'S SEEMINGLY INNOCUOUS MISSION ADDED MOMENTUM TO THE BURGEONING RUMORS OF IMMEDIATE KAGNEW PHASE OUT.

TIENKEN

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic DecapTIONing: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL MILITARY RELATIONS, MILITARY BASES, ALLEGATIONS, CLOSURE OF OFFICES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 05-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
DecapTION Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
DecapTION Note:
Disposition Action: Released in Full
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: 200202525
Disposition Comment: RECORDING OF CLASSIFICATION/RECLASSIFICATION ACTION IN SAS (STATE ARCHIVING SYSTEM) BY THE DESIGNATED AUTHORITY FOR THIS ACTION, WHO HAS APPROVED RECLASSIFICATION AND OR EXTENSION ACTION ON THIS DOCUMENT.
Disposition Date: 03-Dec-2007 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: Released in Full by JOHN BLODGETT on 03-DEC-07 ;
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ADDIS01335
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770076-0960
Format: TEL
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770390/aaaadarv.tel
Line Count: 153
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 69ca12bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY, STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY, STADIS
Reference: 77 ADDIS ABABA 1078
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3199909
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KAGNEW STATION
TAGS: MARR, ET, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/69ca12bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009